

(1) Afghan Election...

National Directorate of Security on the election day was unprecedented in the last four elections.

"What was perhaps most impressive to me was I watched the different security pillars, along with the civil authorities, become well-integrated" thus ensuring an environment where despite threats it was safe to vote.

Miller said he has watched the elections in 2009, the 2014 elections and last year's parliamentary elections and that this year's elections were in some cases similar to the previous election days, but the level of integration was new: "I think what set it apart was, I watched the integration of your security leadership, in this case Minister Khalid, Minister Andarabi and Director of the NDS Zia Saraj. They worked together, they shared resources across, and their example spreads down to the provincial level and to the local levels."

The US general said that so far he has not received an order for a reduction of troops.

"My message to the people of Afghanistan is this violence has been going on for forty years and the Afghan people deserve for this violence to stop. This is going to take different sides talking to one another. I do believe that a political settlement is not only required but I believe that peace is the will of the people and if we listen to the people, that is the direction we are to be going," Gen. Miller added. (Tolo news)

(2) Front-Runners ...

show that 60 to 70% of people voted (for us," Saleh was quoted by news outlet VOA as saying in a story on its website. Ghani and Abdullah were also the top two candidates in the last election in 2014, leading to months of turmoil as both men accused each other of fraud. The United States finally stepped in, brokering a power-sharing deal under which Ghani became president and Abdullah accepted the new post of chief executive.

Abdullah was also involved in a months-long election dispute in 2009 when he challenged the victory of then-incumbent Hamid Karzai. Afghan presidential candidates have a pattern of assembling competing coalitions of regional and ethnic chieftains, and accusing rival camps of organising fraud in far-flung districts under the control of their supporters.

The chief executive of the electoral commission, Habiburrahman Nang, told a press conference that no candidate had the right to declare himself the winner before the results are tallied.

Preliminary results are not expected before Oct. 19 and final results not until Nov. 7.

Abdullah said on Monday he would accept only votes that were filed with biometric voter verification. Problems with scanning machines had led the commission to also accept votes without scanning fingerprints. Foreign countries that have troops in Afghanistan are wary of yet another destabilising election dispute.

Boasting of victory before the election commission has even counted votes is unhelpful, said Czech Republic Ambassador to Afghanistan Petr Stepanek, whose country has 350 soldiers in the U.S.-led NATO force that supports the government.

"It's pushing the election commission into murky water. (The candidates) should respect the institutions," Stepanek said in an interview.

The winner would have a stronger position to conduct any negotiations with the Taliban aimed at ending the country's 18-year war.

Tight security ensured the election on Saturday was conducted in relative calm, with only small-scale attacks by the Taliban.

At least 2.2 million people voted, with more votes to be gathered, the commission said on Sunday.

Ballot boxes are being transported from remote areas to Kabul for counting. The process can be dangerous.

Thirteen election staff members have been kidnapped since Saturday by the Taliban, and 11 others were wounded on election day, election commission spokesman Abdul Aziz Ibrahim said.

The Taliban said on Saturday that low turnout underlined that the election was illegitimate and that Afghan people do not accept "foreign imported processes."

The militant group threatened attacks leading up to election day, causing many voters to stay home. (Reuters)

(3) Afghan Elections ...

victory announcement before the announcement of the official results, warning that it will be considered an electoral violation.

Meanwhile, in a statement, the European Union has called on the candidates to exercise restraint and await the official

announcement of preliminary and final results by the election commission and submit their evidence based complaints to the complaints commission.

Despite of Taliban's repeated threats, Afghans lined up at polling stations early on Saturday this week to cast their votes in the fourth Afghan presidential elections.

A total of 18 candidates were registered for the presidency including President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah. However, four candidates withdraw from the competition. More than 9.6 million voters were registered with the Independent Election Commission to cast their votes but apparently there was a low voter turnout.

The preliminary results is scheduled to be announced on Oct. 19 and final ones on Nov. 7.

If none of the candidates win over 50 percent of votes in the first round, the two leading candidates will enter a runoff. (ATN)

(4) Protection ...

Nangarhar, Samangan and Herat provinces," he said.

Illegal extraction of mines still continued in areas where the government had no control, he said.

Mutfa said a 3,000-personnel strong security unit had been created for ensuring security of mines in the country.

Afghan forces are currently deployed for security of the Mes Aynak Mine, petroleum basin of the Amu River, Mazar-Shebrghan Pipeline and lapis lazuli mine in Karan wa Menjan district of Badakhshan, he said.

He said besides preventing illegal mining, the MPC was also preparing plans for improving protection of mineral resources which were currently under threat.

"MoMP in cooperation with this committee has prepared a list of mines which are currently illegally extracted or under threat of being plundered and shared it with NSC for taking measures," he said. Mutfa said the committee had also shared a list of figures involved in illegal mining with the NSC.

"Whenever a mining project is under work, the commission is responsible to take measures for security of that area and security of MoMP officers there," he added.

According to MoMP, the value of Afghanistan's mineral deposits is estimated to be around three trillion US dollars. (Pajhwok)

(5) Afghans Ask ...

Officials from the Independent Election Commission (IEC) on Sunday said that the results of 3,763 polling centers from across the country have arrived in Kabul, and the current count of presidential votes is 2,196,463.

Speaking at a news conference in Kabul, the Election Commission's chief Hawa Alam Nuristani said that the organization is determined to protect the votes of the Afghan people and prevent any kind of fraud. (Tolo news)

(6) Presidential ...

Belqis Roshan, a lawmaker from western Farah province, said that one of the reasons behind the low turnout was 'warlords' and 'traitors' among the candidates.

A number of other candidates expressed similar views.

Mir Rahman Rahmani, Wolesi Jirga speaker, said that the election was nationwide and people voted for electing their future president despite security threats.

He asked the election commissions to ensure transparency in the vote count process and announce clean results.

"Any violations and electoral crimes can cause dangerous consequences and create political crisis," he added.

Rahmani said the Wolesi Jirga would be closely monitoring the election commissions' work and hoped the election results would convince the people.

The Independent Election Commission (IEC) says more than two million votes were cast at 3,736 polling centres in 29 provinces of the country on September 28.

The presidential ballot featured 13 candidates including President Ghani and CEO Abdullah. (Pajhwok)

(7) US State Dept ...

voter lists, which was a challenge caused, according to the IEC, from having to merge a "technical system"-- involving biometric and other online data--with the "physical process" of registration.

• We categorically condemn all attacks on voters and other efforts to undermine the election. These attacks stand in stark contrast to the aspirations of the Afghan people for peace, security, and economic stability.

Over 260 security incidents were reported during Saturday's presidential election, security sources said, with 90

of the incidents directly targeting the polling centers. These sources told TOLONews that over 20 police officers and nine civilians were killed as a result of these incidents, while 37 police officers and 70 civilians were wounded. The Afghan government deployed over 72,000 security force members to provide security for the election process, according to these sources.

Nevertheless, many international news agencies have reported that Afghan security prevented mass-casualty attacks on the day of elections, despite Taliban threats.

• Afghan government institutions and leaders must be transparent and accountable to the Afghan people. We expect Afghanistan's institutions to take all necessary steps to ensure the election, including the investigation of complaints and tabulation of results, is transparent and credible to Afghan voters and the international community.

A complaint hotline hosted by TOLONews on WhatsApp received thousands of responses, many about problems with biometric devices and names not on voter lists, but there were also allegations of corruption, including video clips showing votes being illegally counted at specific polling sites. But larger accusations between the teams of presidential candidates leading up to the election have made corruption the dominant conversation about the election, both within Afghanistan and international stakeholders. A group of Afghan leaders, led by former president Hamed Karzai, issued statements just days before the election requesting that the election be canceled because it will not be considered legitimate, which in turn might lead to chaos.

• While waiting for an announcement of authoritative results by the Independent Election Commission (IEC), we urge both candidates and voters not to prejudice the outcome of the election or speculate on partial returns.

Even as official vote counts are still being tallied and verified, presidential candidates are already offering recommendations for how the results should be handled. For example, on Monday night Presidential candidate Abdullah Abdullah stated that he would like to only allow for the "pure votes," meaning votes from people who were in the voter database and were confirmed by the biometric devices (some voters were allowed to bypass this requirement because of the system glitches).

The Independent Election Commission continues to provide updates on the vote count as various polling stations around the country report their numbers, some of which were delayed--and with whom the IEC has had little or no communication--because of insurgent attacks on telecom infrastructure that cut off mobile and internet access. (Tolo news)

(8) Election Set ...

Analysts Network. Many Afghans still braved the threat of militant attacks to vote in an election seen as a major test of the Western-backed government's ability to protect democracy against Taliban attempts to derail it.

Over a dozen candidates are vying for the presidency, led by incumbent Ashraf Ghani and his former deputy Abdullah Abdullah.

The Afghanistan Analysts Network said there were also technical shortcomings in the vote including biometric devices not working, missing voter names and election material sent to the wrong province.

As many as eight election staff were kidnapped on Saturday evening by the Taliban in central Parwan province's Shinwari district, the provincial governor's spokeswoman said.

"The local government and tribal elders are working to release them," she said on Sunday. Two policemen and one civilian were killed in mostly small-scale Taliban attacks, and 37 people were injured, the interior ministry said.

Previous elections were marred by dozens of deaths, accusations of fraud and allegations that the election commission was not independent. Memories of those issues hung over Saturday's vote.

The days after voting are also fraught. The Taliban often attack those transporting ballot boxes from local voting centers to larger regional offices for counting. From there, the boxes make their way to the capital Kabul. (Reuters)

(9) 33 militants killed ...

militants, wounded 4 others and destroyed a mortar launcher during the clashes with Taliban militants in Moqor and Gilan districts.

The U.S. forces also conducted airstrikes in Nanwayi area of Charkh district in Logar which killed 2 Taliban militants and wounded another militant, the 203rd

Thunder Corps added. (KP)

(10) Torkham Crossing ...

skirmishes, as former national security chief and presidential candidate Rahmatullah Nabil alleged that President Ghani has chosen to recognize the Durand Line as a border between Afghanistan and Pakistan for his own personal interests.

Nabil claimed that based on his information, Pakistan has been pulling the fence inside Afghanistan up to 20 km and has distributed Pakistani ID cards in those areas.

The Afghan government, however, says that only the Afghan people can decide on the Durand Line. (Tolo news)

(11) 4 Civilians ...

He said four of his family members including two men and two women were killed and four others including him were injured.

Maawia, one another injured person said, "We were in our home when the mortar shell landed in our house."

He said that three people were killed instantly when the bomb hit their house and five people including his 13 years old daughter were injured.

He said that his daughter succumbed to injuries before reaching to the hospital. Doctors in Maimana Civil Hospital said that the health condition of two of the injured was critical.

Meanwhile, a number of relatives of the incident victims carried the bodies of the dead people to the police headquarters of Balcheragh district and asked the government not to carry out airstrikes and mortar shell attacks in the future.

According to another report, militants torched 10 houses belonged to Afghan security forces in Khwaja Sabzposh district of Faryab.

Abdul Karim Yurish, Faryab police spokesman, said that Taliban militants set on fire the houses of 10 local security forces in Khwaja Qeshri area of the district after a clash. (Pajhwok)

(12) Great Turnout ...

to shift any polling station," he added. Police chief Mohammad UsmanJanbaz said that at least 18 civilians and security personnel suffered casualties as a result of Taliban attacks on the election day.

He said at least 30 insurgents were also killed and wounded in retaliatory raids. "Joint security forces through a proper plan provided secure and peaceful environment for election. At least 11 attacks took place on the voting day. We defused 20 landmines, prevented four explosions, so we provided best security and did not allow the enemy to disrupt the national process," he informed. (Pajhwok)

streets of Paris for the final memorial at Saint-Sulpice church. The Élysée says 30 heads of state and government are present, including Putin, Hungarian prime minister Viktor Orban and German president Frank-Walter Steinmeier. German former chancellor Gerhard Schroeder is also present as well as European Union Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker.

US secretary of state Mike Pompeo sent his condolences to France on Sunday, which was the first statement from the US government since Chirac's death. "Having dedicated his life to public service, former president Chirac worked tirelessly to uphold the values and ideals that we share with France," said Pompeo. But there was no acknowledgment of his opposition to the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, when Chirac and Putin were united in their opposition. Speaking about Chirac in the UK's Financial Times newspaper in June, Putin said: "He is a true intellectual, a real professor, a very level-headed man as well as very interesting."

Analysts say there is such an outpouring of emotion for Chirac because he was considered a warm politician who was more comfortable mixing with the crowd at the annual Paris agricultural fair than giving speeches in the ornate Élysée Palace. Chirac is to be buried at Montparnasse Cemetery in southern Paris, beside his daughter Laurence who died in 2016 aged 58 due to a battle with anorexia. Chirac will also be remembered as the first French president to acknowledge the country's role in the deportation of Jews during World War II and for warning about climate change before it was high on the global political agenda.

But the majority of tributes today are focusing not on policy achievements but instead on Chirac's charisma and genuine love for a leader whom Macron said on Thursday "embodied a certain idea of France." (CGIN)

(14) Xi Focus...

Party's top post, Xi addressed senior cadres with a lecture spanning the history of world socialism over the past 500 years. He talked of how China had failed

in its previous experiment with all other "-isms," and directed cadres to unreservedly follow socialism with Chinese characteristics.

The Party's authority was further emphasized in October 2017, with the establishment of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era.

Xi demanded full and strict governance over the 90 million-member CPC. To this end, he has introduced an eight-point decision on how to improve conduct, rolled out stricter Party rules and regulations, and over the seven years, launched four education campaigns to strengthen the Party.

"Every day, we brush our teeth, wash our faces, clean the house and do the laundry. For Party building, we must do the same," he said.

An unprecedented anti-corruption campaign has left no stone unturned. In the first five years of Xi's leadership, 440 centrally-administrated officials -- mostly ministerial-level or above -- were punished. "Xi and his colleagues preside over the world's largest and most successful Marxist-Leninist organization, and they are determined to ensure that it remains so," Foreign Affairs magazine said in an article. In late 2016, Xi's core status in the CPC Central Committee and the whole Party was established. He was re-elected general secretary of the CPC Central Committee in October 2017 and Chinese president in March 2018. During a visit to Italy this year, asked about how he felt about being Chinese president, Xi told President of the Italian Chamber of Deputies Roberto Fico that governing such a huge country requires a strong sense of responsibility and hard work. "I am willing to be selfless and devote myself to China's development," Xi said. "I will not let the people down." (Xinhua)

(15) Erdogan: Khashoggi...

international relations, and the loss of trust and safety between the press and states within which it operates by calling it "arguably the most influential and controversial incident of the 21st century, barring the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks." He insisted that "no other event since 9/11 has posed such a serious threat to the international order or challenged the conventions that the world has come to take for granted."

Khashoggi, a prominent Saudi journalist and columnist for the Washington Post who held an influential position in the Saudi press before going into self-exile for criticising the kingdom's recent policies, disappeared on 2 October after entering the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. It was later confirmed that Saudi agents murdered Khashoggi in a "premeditated" attack.

His remains have not been found but international organisations including the UN and CIA have said Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman ordered the hit which Turkey said was carried out by a 15-man squad.

Erdogan ensured, however, that Saudi-Turkish relations were not harmed in the article, reassuring that he "made a clear and unmistakable distinction between the thugs, who murdered Khashoggi and King Salman and his loyal subjects." He also stated that Turkey's concern over the murder is merely "based on our desire to uphold the rules-based international system. Hence our refusal to let the Khashoggi murder be portrayed as a bilateral dispute between Turkey and Saudi Arabia. Turkey has always seen, and continues to see, the kingdom as its friend and ally."

The topic and uproar over Khashoggi's murder has been reignited in recent weeks, ahead of the anniversary of his disappearance which will be marked on Wednesday.

In an interview with US TV station PBS which is set to be aired tomorrow, Bin Salman has said that he bears responsibility for the killing of Khashoggi "because it happened under my watch" however he went on to deny ordering the killing. (MEM)

(16) 'Arrest for Treason...

narrative fizzled out, however, after the official probe into Trump's relationship with Russia turned up no actual evidence of collusion.

Democrats have used Trump's call with Zelensky to launch an impeachment inquiry, arguing that the president was offering the Ukrainian leader a quid pro quo, more US military aid in return for a probe into Biden and his family. However, a transcript of the call, which the White House released last week, does not explicitly prove Trump made military aid dependent on investigating Biden. The controversy was set in motion earlier this month after a "whistleblower" came forward with an "urgent concern" that Trump had acted inappropriately during the call with Zelensky. (RT)